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LETTER DATED 4 APRIL 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to bring to your urgent attention the desperate situation of Iraqi civilians who are crossing all along the border into the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Events in Iraq and the method by which Iraqi military has dealt with the uprising of Iraqi population has lead to uprooting and driving of hundreds of thousands of them towards the neighbouring countries. It is estimated that about 500,000 Iraqi civilians will try to cross the borders into Iran within a very short period of time of the next few days.

Up until noon today, more than 110,000 Iraqi civilians have already crossed the border into Iran along the border including more than 45,000 in the North. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi people and their vehicles, forming a line of more than 60 kilometres, are crossing into Iran at the only paved road at Haji Omran border post. Thousands of other Iraqi people including elderly and children, many on bare foot in mountainous areas in the north and under heart-breaking circumstances are trying to escape the military attacks and find refuge in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The influx of refugees is also continuing in the South, albeit at a slower pace.

The Islamic Republic of Iran - in line with its long standing policy and in spite of the hardships it is facing - has kept its borders open to Iraqi people escaping repression so as to decrease the pressure upon them. The influx of refugees in addition to its obvious economic and social problems has caused tension and chaos at the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The prolongation of the situation, with its implications for Iraq's neighbours, will have consequences that in fact threaten regional peace and security. The magnitude of the suffering of Iraqi refugees, its international character and its consequences for regional peace and security make a concerted international reaction by the Security Council of the United Nations a political and humanitarian imperative.

It will be highly appreciated if this letter were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kamal KHARRAZI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative